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Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children
Second substantive session
New York, 29 January-2 February 2001
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*
Organizational arrangements for the preparatory process and the special session

Establishment of the list of speakers for the debate in the plenary of the special session of the General Assembly on children

Information note by the Secretariat

1. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/26 of 20 November 2000, the special session of the General Assembly on children shall be held from Wednesday, 19 September, to Friday, 21 September 2001. Based on the proposals contained in the note by the Chairperson of the Preparatory Committee (A/AC.256/9) and in accordance with established practice, the list of speakers for the debate in the plenary of the special session would be established as outlined below.

Schedule of the plenary meetings of the special session

2. Six plenary meetings would be held over the three-day period, with two meetings per day, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Time limits in the debate in plenary

3. Statements in the debate in plenary should be limited to five minutes.

Establishment of the list of speakers for the debate in plenary

4. The list of speakers for the debate in plenary would be established by a drawing of lots. A meeting for this purpose would be convened by the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, on a date to be determined after appropriate consultations.

5. Member States, the Holy See and Switzerland, in their capacity as observer States, and Palestine, in its capacity as observer, would be invited to participate in the drawing of lots.

6. The drawing of lots would be organized on the basis of six plenary meetings, and the number of speaking slots at each meeting would be calculated on the basis of a five-minute time limit per statement.

7. To allow time for organizational matters, the Wednesday morning meeting would only have 25 speaking slots. The Wednesday afternoon meeting, the Thursday morning and afternoon meetings and the Friday morning meeting would each have 34 speaking

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slots. The last meeting on Friday afternoon would also have 34 speaking slots, and might extend beyond 7 p.m. to accommodate all remaining speakers and to adopt the final document(s).

8. The order of precedence for the list of speakers would be as follows: (a) heads of State/heads of Government; (b) Vice-Presidents/Crown Princes or Princesses; (c) the highest-ranking official of the Holy See and Switzerland, in their capacity as observer States and of Palestine, in its capacity as observer; (d) Deputy Prime Ministers; (e) Ministers; (f) Vice-Ministers; and (g) Chairmen of delegations.

Procedure for the drawing of lots

9. The Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services would preside over the meeting and would draw names of delegations from two boxes (box No. 1 and box No. 2).

10. Box No. 1 would contain the names of Member States that had informed the secretariat of the General Assembly, in writing, by 5 p.m. two days before the meeting, that their speaker would be a head of State or head of Government. The box would also contain the names of Member States that had informed the secretariat of the Assembly, in writing, by the same deadline, that their speaker would be a Vice-President or Crown Prince/Princess. Should the Holy See, Switzerland or Palestine indicate, in writing, by the same deadline, that they would be represented by the highest-ranking official, their names would also be included in the first box. Box No. 2 would contain the names of the delegations not included in the first box.

11. Names would be drawn first from box No. 1 and then from box No. 2.

12. When called, the representative of the Member State, the Holy See, Switzerland or Palestine would approach the podium, where six boxes representing the six meetings would be displayed. The representative would then be invited to draw, from the box representing the preferred meeting, a chip showing the number of the speaking slot, and would then be asked to indicate or confirm the level of representation of the speaker. If at that time a delegation were unable to indicate the level of representation, the Secretariat would record it at the level of Chairman of Delegation. The result of the drawing of lots and the level of representation indicated by delegations would be recorded by the Secretariat.

13. Should a representative be absent from the meeting room when the name of his/her delegation was drawn from box No. 1, the delegation would be given the opportunity to select a speaking slot from the box representing the meeting of choice (as availability permitted) upon the conclusion of the drawing of lots from box No.1. This opportunity would be given in the same order in which the delegation's name was initially drawn. The same procedure would be repeated at the end of the drawing of lots from box No. 2.

14. Within 10 working days of the meeting, the Secretariat would publish the list of speakers. For each meeting, the list of speakers would follow the order of precedence indicated in paragraph 8 above. Within each category of speakers, the list would follow the order resulting from the drawing of lots.

15. Should a delegation be unable to attend the meeting and participate in the drawing of lots, it would have the opportunity to select a speaking slot from those remaining by contacting the secretariat of the General Assembly at any time after the drawing of lots.

Changes in the level of representation and exchanges of speaking slots

16. Should the level of representation of delegations change after the drawing of lots, the replacement speaker would be assigned the last position in the appropriate category at the same meeting, with the following exceptions:

(a) Should a Member State, having participated in the drawing of lots from box No. 1, inform the Secretariat after the drawing of lots that the level of representation of its speaker had changed from the head of State/head of Government or the Vice-President/Crown Prince or Princess categories to another category, the replacement speaker would be assigned the last position in the appropriate category at the last plenary meeting. This provision would not apply to changes within the head of State/head of Government category or between the head of State/head of Government category and the Vice-President/Crown Prince or Princess category (for instance, should a head of State subsequent to the drawing of lots be replaced by a head of Government, the replacement speaker would retain the same speaking slot since both speakers would be in the same category). In addition, should a head of State or head of Government subsequent to the drawing of lots be

replaced by a Vice-President or Crown Prince/Princess, the replacement speaker would be assigned the last position in the Vice-President/Crown Prince or Princess category at the same meeting, and vice versa.

(b) Should the Holy See, Switzerland or Palestine, having participated in the drawing of lots from box No. 1, inform the Secretariat after the drawing of lots that the level of representation of its speaker had changed from the highest-ranking-official category to another category, the replacement speaker would be assigned the last position in the appropriate category at the last plenary meeting.

17. Exchanges of speaking slots between delegations would be possible, and both delegations should inform the secretariat of the General Assembly in writing of such an intent. In the case of equality of rank, a delegation would be assigned the exact position of the other delegation. In the case of inequality of rank, a delegation would be assigned the last position in the appropriate category at the meeting to which it was changing.

18. Once the date of the drawing of lots has been decided, a note verbale accompanied by an information note detailing the procedures for establishing the list of speakers for the debate in the plenary of the special session would be sent by the Secretariat to Member States, the Holy See, Switzerland and Palestine.

Inscription in the list of speakers for the debate in plenary of participants other than Member States, the Holy See, Switzerland and Palestine

19. Information regarding inscription in the list of speakers for the debate in plenary of participants other than Member States, the Holy See, Switzerland and Palestine would be made available at a later date.